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CHRISTMAS BAN IN 1643

Yuletide Observance Was Not Per-
mitted by Edict of "Roundhead
Parliament" in England.


IN THE northern part of Europe the ancient people kindled great fires to their gods, Odin and Thor, and sacrifices of men and cattle were made. The ancient Goths and Saxons termed this festival or feast "Yule," and we still use the word "Yuletide" in our day. Among the Teutons this holiday season was celebrated by decorating giant fir trees. The decorations consisted of lights, nuts, balls, golden apples and animals. These were to symbolize flashes of lightning, moon, stars and sun, while the animals represented sacrifices.

Christmas was not among the early festivals of the church. We find the first evidence of the feast from Egypt, according to the historians of the church, and December 25 was not the day on which it was universally celebrated. It was not until the Fourth or Fifth centuries that the celebration of the festival on this day spread to the East. The Nativity was celebrated December 25 at Rome before 354, and at Constantinople, not prior to 379.

As paganism began to be supplanted by Christianity, many of the old customs were taken and handed down through the generations. In the Anglo-Saxon days of King Alfred the holiday season began December 10 and closed January 6. When Puritanism arose in England the fate of Christmas was threatened for a time, and even extended to this country, since the Puritans brought along with them to New England a feeling against the celebration of Christmas.

In 1643 the "Roundhead parliament" in England put a ban on the observance of Christmas. The court of Massachusetts in 1659 followed England's example and Christmas was put under a ban there. With the restoration of the English monarchy the restoration of Christmas was brought about, and Massachusetts again followed England's example and in 1681 the ban was lifted. From this time on Christmas has remained, and is now celebrated throughout the entire civilized world.

A Christmas "Suppose"

WE would not change the children's Christmas. But suppose all the grown-up people were to say to one another: "This year, instead of my giving you a present and your giving me a present, let us club together and give our present to some poor child who will not have any Christmas. There are hundreds of them somewhere. Or, if we do not know of such a child, let us give our present to a hospital for children, a home for crippled children, for incurables, for the aged, the blind, the feeble-minded." This to be, of course, in addition to what we usually give to charities at this season. Why could we not try this as an experiment, and see what the result would be?—Christian Register.

The Quinine That Does Not Affect The Head
Because of its tonic and laxative effect, LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE (Tablets) can be taken by anyone without causing nervousness or ringing in the head. L. W. GROVE'S signature on box. 5c.

Remember

That every added sub-
scriber helps to make this
paper better for everybodyChristmas
Collars

By MARY GRAHAM BONNER

Copyright, 1931, Western Newspaper Union.



ment which she had repeated several times.

She was speaking of George Farwell. George was so good looking with his wonderful blue eyes, his brown hair, his fine erect figure.

Wherever she saw men she thought how insignificant they looked beside George. She was glad that she thought that way. She hoped others thought that way about the men they cared for. Then everything would be so smooth and so simple.

She wanted everyone to like her George immensely. But it would be embarrassing if everyone thought just the same about him as she did.

The wedding was to be Christmas afternoon. Then they had planned to go to their own new little home which they had just finished furnishing and fixing up. They were going to have their own little Christmas tree there—quite by themselves, and their friends had left their wedding presents and their Christmas presents there, though almost all of the former they had seen, of course.

"Are you almost ready?" It was Mrs. Allen calling up the stairs.

"Almost, mother dear," she answered.

"You'll be late," her mother called.

"I'll hurry," she said.

"Do you want any help?"

But she had taken longer than she had thought. Yes, if she didn't hurry she would be late! Still she would have George all her life now. How wonderful it would be! She wondered if that was why brides were so often late because they felt they had so much time!

It was a gloriously happy thought to realize how much time she had.

She was only ten minutes late. The few friends were at the Christmas day wedding. And her bouquet was of holly and mistletoe. She had always said she would love to have such a wedding bouquet. It would be so merry and Christmasy and such a happy, gay kind of a bouquet.

George had consented of course. He agreed to everything she said, because he loved her so, and she was so fair with him, too, because she loved him so!

The ceremony was over. They drove away in a low sleigh with jingling bells to the small house. There, by themselves, they opened presents. What a glorious time they had.

And she had a little surprise for him. Just a little bit of a surprise. But she knew he would like it.

"Open that box, there, George," she said.

He opened it.

And looked at some collars, many, many collars, all much too big for him.

"When I was buying my wedding clothes in town that time, George, I remembered that you'd spoken of a wonderful kind of collar you liked. I remembered the name too. I was a little puzzled when the man asked me your size. I told him though that as long as he had the right kind the size didn't make any difference. When he asked me if you were big or small I told him you were big of course!"

"Why, George, what is the matter? Won't they fit you? Is the size so important?"

"My darling little girl," he laughed, "what does it matter what the size is. That is—it does matter about wearing them I'm afraid, my love. But to think you thought of me even when you were getting the wedding fineries and remembered the name of the collar."

"They're my Christmas collars," he exclaimed, "and I'll put them away in the box with the Christmas bouquet we're going to save. Such a Christmas gift from a dear little bride should never be mangled by any laundry!"

"What a silly I am," she laughed gaily.

"But such an adorable silly," George answered as he kissed her.

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This was very puzzling. Had Elizabeth loved someone in her earlier days—perhaps when she had gone away on a visit? No one knew. But everyone was puzzled. So much puzzled that they asked no more questions. They stopped telling her she should marry Howard. They stopped telling her what a wonderful husband he would make, and how much he loved her.

They were speculating on which visit it could have been when the tragedy occurred. And had the mysterious man married or had he been already married and so Elizabeth, as a nice, quiet girl had quickly taken herself home and out of the way?

It was snowing hard. Elizabeth was getting together her Christmas presents when the door bell rang. Outside stood Howard.

"I thought perhaps you'd not mind if I went with you when you took around the presents," he said. "I knew it was just about your time."

How lovely it was outside. The snow was falling, the air was so clear and cool, and here was Howard, so

straight and tall, his face glowing with health, his eyes so clear, so keen and so devoted. It made even the cold, crisp air seem warm and soft and affectionate.

They had delivered the presents and were now passing the small church. Inside someone was practicing on the organ. That was doubtless the organist practicing for the music for the service in the morning. There was much beautiful music always for Christmas! So many wonderful hymns, and such an atmosphere about it all.

"I wish," Howard said, "that he'd stop practicing the Christmas music and play us a wedding march."

"Perhaps he would," said Elizabeth.

"Do you mean it?" Howard shouted.

"Oh yes, my dear, of course I mean it. You've not said a word about marrying the last four times I've seen you and I've been about to do it myself. The people—they tried to keep me from seeing how wonderful you were by talking about you, making you what they saw in you—not giving me a chance to see for myself."

The organist played the wedding march. The clergyman came over hurriedly to marry them, bringing two witnesses with him.

"The Christmas bells and the wedding bells are joining together for us," Howard said a little later.

They took the basket which had had the presents in it back home. Then they announced to all the people what they had done.

"Merrie Christmas!" everyone wished them. But Elizabeth answered, "We don't need to be wished 'Merrie Christmas,' but we thank you all just the same!"

Christmas Wedding Bells

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WITH THE CHRISTMAS PLANTS

Trees and Flowers Are Believed to
Owe Peculiarities to Connection
With Jesus.

THE legend of the Glastonbury Thorn is that after the death of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea came over to England. Shortly before Christmas, he rested on the summit of Weary-all hill, Glastonbury. There he thrust into the ground his staff, and on Christmas eve it was found to be covered with white blossoms. The bush is said to have continued blooming thus each Christmas eve until during the civil wars, when it was cut down. Cuttings from the original thorn are said to bloom in this same wonderful way even yet.

The Silician children put penny-royal in their cott on Christmas eve, believing that at the exact hour and minute when Jesus was born it will blossom.

There is a cherished legend in the East that the Rose of Jericho first blossomed at the birth of Jesus, closed at the crucifixion, and opened again at Easter, from which comes its name of Resurrection flower.

Many plants, trees and flowers are believed to owe their peculiarities to their connection with the birth or the childhood of Jesus. "The Star of Bethlehem" is so called because its white starlike flowers resemble the pictures of the Star of the East.

"Our Lady's Bedstraw" received its name because it was believed that the manger in which the Babe lay was filled with this plant.

An old account tells the story in this manner: "The broom and the chick-peas began to rustle and crackle, and by this noise betrayed the fugitives. The flax bristled up. Happily for her, Mary was near a juniper; the hospitable tree opened its branches as arms and inclosed the Virgin and the Child within their folds, affording them a secure hiding place. Then the Virgin uttered a malediction against the brooms and the chick-peas, and ever since that day they have always rustled and crackled. But later the Virgin pardoned the flax its weakness and gave the juniper her blessing," which is said to account for the use of the juniper as Christmas decorations in some countries.

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